

County of Los Angeles
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES

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BRYCE YOKOMIZO
Director



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August 16, 2004

TO: Each Supervisor

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bryce Yokomizo', written over the 'TO:' line.

FROM: Bryce Yokomizo, Director

SUBJECT: **BOARD OF SUPERVISORS: MOTION - SYN 12 (JUNE 15, 2004) - REPORT ON FOOD INSECURITY AND HUNGER IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY**

This is in response to your Board's Motion of June 15, 2004 - Report on Food Insecurity and Hunger in Los Angeles County. As a result of the June 3, 2004 UCLA Center for Health Policy Research report on food insecurity and hunger in Los Angeles County which indicates that the Antelope Valley has the highest percentage of low-income food insecure adults, the motion is designed to decrease the risk of hunger in the Antelope Valley by increasing food stamp participation to eligible families and individuals. The motion further acknowledges that food insecurity exists in other regions of Los Angeles County and that measures should be identified that can be implemented on a Countywide basis to increase food stamp utilization throughout Los Angeles County.

As directed in your motion, this is to provide you with an action plan to increase food stamp participation in the Antelope Valley, as determined by a special task force comprised of representatives from the Departments of Public Social Services and Community and Senior Services, community-based organizations and other agencies. The special task force met on July 1, 2004 and August 2, 2004, and will continue to meet monthly through February 2005. The task force established the following specific goal:

By February 2005, increase the number of households receiving food stamps only in Lancaster and Palmdale by 35 percent (1,200 households).

Households receiving food stamps only are households which do not receive cash assistance through CalWORKs or General Relief, and generally include one or more low-income working adults.

To achieve this goal, the task force adopted the following strategies:

- DPSS will outstation eligibility staff at community-based organizations to process food stamp applications.
- DPSS will outreach to families that receive Medi-Cal benefits, who do not receive food stamp benefits. DPSS will also encourage every family that applies for Medi-Cal benefits to also apply for food stamp benefits.
- DPSS will outreach to potentially eligible food stamp applicants at local retail grocery stores by conducting well-publicized prescreening events.

- DPSS will screen all food stamp applicants for their eligibility to waive the face-to-face interview in our district office to facilitate enrollment in the Food Stamp Program. This will improve access to the program for working families and others who may have difficulty coming to our district office during normal working hours.
- DPSS will seek to reduce the number of food stamp only households terminated from the program for failure to submit required documents by outreaching to those participants prior to termination.
- DPSS will work with radio and local newspapers in the Antelope Valley to publicize the availability of Food Stamp Program benefits to low income households through Public Service Announcements.
- CSS Adult Protective Services staff will assist potentially eligible applicants, at home visits, in completing a self-administered prescreening checklist to begin the food stamp application process.
- The Department of Parks and Recreation will distribute food stamp outreach flyers at special events.
- Community-based organizations and other agencies will distribute food stamp outreach flyers.

Based on the impact of these strategies in the Antelope Valley, DPSS will evaluate their applicability elsewhere in the County and enhance our overall food stamp outreach efforts, as directed by your Board.

In addition, my staff met with Viggo Butler, Commissioner, Quality and Productivity Commission, to discuss the feasibility of seeking funding from the Productivity Investment Fund to support these outreach activities. Mr. Butler is working with my staff to develop a proposal to request such funding.

We will provide you with quarterly reports on the progress of these outreach efforts to increase utilization of food stamps by eligible families and individuals.

BY:jw

c: Chief Administrative Officer
County Counsel
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors